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Textual Selves

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DUNAWAY

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Textual Selves

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BY

Tasha Dunaway

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Abstract

Textual Selves: Appetite in the Construction of Identity in the Writing of William Byrd II and Thomas Jefferson

By Tasha D. Dunaway

Through an examination of the texts of William Byrd II and Thomas Jefferson, I consider appetite as an instrument of self-construction in relation to two poles of male identity: the patriarch and the libertine. Byrd and Jefferson's public images as patriarchs are complicated by an examination of their private texts which reveal a decidedly libertine tendency. These two men compose texts (and personae) relative to socially accepted notions of appetite.

Chapter One discusses the composition of works written for introspective purposes, arguably private works—commonplace books, scrapbooks, diaries, and letters—in an effort to distinguish the ways in which appetite operates in the construction of self. In coterie writings produced for intimate audiences, these men display intemperance while also acknowledging public scrutiny. This representation of appetite in a range of texts demonstrates a privately libertine identity.

Chapter Two argues that the representation of passion (which can be seen as a corollary to appetite) in public texts is performed to show a disciplined persona. To demonstrate control over appetite, Byrd and Jefferson, when writing for the public sphere, present passionate topics in a cavalier way. This presentation of public works creates personae of temperance which differs greatly from the represented selves established in their private writings.

Contents

Introduction

As constituents of what Jürgen Habermas defined as the "private sphere," Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) and Virginia plantation owner William Byrd II (1674-1744) negotiated their roles between patriarchy and another realm, libertinism.[1] To characterize an eighteenth-century man as libertine was to say that he lacked temperance in spending, eating, drinking, and having sex. However, these characterizations only partially identify any eighteenth-century man. Libertine men could also be well-respected patriarchs who held respectable positions within their communities, including being elected to political offices. Michael Kimmel writes about the nature of patriarchy in terms of identity by tracing the origins of the "Genteel Patriarch" to Europe and explains that this ideal was popular through the early part of the nineteenth century. Kimmel describes the Genteel Patriarch as a man who does the following:

> Represents a dignified aristocratic manhood, committed to the British upper-class code of honor and to well-rounded character, with exquisite tastes and manners and refined sensibilities. To the Genteel Patriarch, manhood meant property ownership and a benevolent patriarchal authority at home, including the moral instruction of his sons….For an illustration of the Genteel Patriarch, think of Thomas Jefferson at Monticello. (16)

[1] In his work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), Jürgen Habermas defined what he called the "private sphere," which he believed was established as such in the eighteenth century. However, more recent scholars such as Dena Goodman (*Public Sphere and Private Life,* 1992) have questioned Habermas's theories suggesting that such a drastic dichotomy between the realms of public and private is impractical, and oversimplifies a complicated relationship between author and audience.

Indeed, Thomas Jefferson and William Byrd II possess these characteristics, but that is not the end of the story. Patriarchy and libertinism can and do coexist within the eighteenth-century man, and this characterization is apparent through the study of their texts.

Libertinism is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a "Disregard of moral restraint, esp. in relations between the sexes; licentious or dissolute practices or habits of life" (Libertinism). The seventeenth-century use of libertinism is, "*Sensualité*, Sensuality, libertinisme, or epicurisme" (Libertinism). This pursuit of pleasure or sensuality through food and sex is linked to libertinism through this seventeenth-century usage. Sensuousness and a refined taste, especially those of a culinary sort, are all descriptions of these two patriarchs, especially in terms of appetite. Libertinism is, for Jefferson, intimately linked to rituals such as the "pleasures of courtship, the thrill of the pressing hand" (Gross 180). Indeed, all libertinism is not the scandalous, bawdy, vulgar display which is often portrayed. In some contexts, libertinism is merely associated with a love of freedom or liberty, both religious and political. However, the most common use of the term is slanderous and tainted with chastisement. For that reason, and perhaps also because of the historically licentious libertines that recall images of rotting syphilis-infected skin, we reserve the use of this noun for only those whom we wish to criticize. Yet, indeed all the uses of "libertine" may be useful in an examination of the appetites of Jefferson and Byrd.

Although the monstrous image of the libertine is not often associated with patriarchs, in actuality many men possessed a vigorous, libertine appetite. While

publically celebrated, the texts of Jefferson and Byrd have received little attention in terms of their relevance to the private life of men during this first period of the private sphere. Patriarchs, as heads of households, were expected to write prolifically both as the voice for their families and as a means of identifying themselves in the midst of a dynamic political culture. It is the opposition of this public culture, according to Jürgen Habermas, that creates a separate private sphere in the eighteenth century. While the secret texts of Byrd have been much studied, Byrd's public writing has earned relatively little attention in opposition to his *Secret Diaries.* On the other hand, Jefferson's public texts have been the focus of study with less regard given to his more intimate, private texts.[2] However, when considering the ways in which the audience was concerned as well as the subject matter, neither can we look only at one type of their writing, nor can we look at these men merely as patriarchs or libertines. Rather, an intricate weaving of characterization is required for the understanding of Jefferson and Byrd as prolific writers of various texts, as patriarchs, and indeed, as libertines with extravagant appetites.

As Robert Appelbaum writes, "as a concept, appetite—from the Latin *appeto,* to make for or to grasp, and hence *appetites,* an inclination toward or a longing to possess—had many applications among the early moderns" (225). Indeed, as Appelbaum states, "appetite could be healthy or deranged, sensual or intellectual, natural or unnatural, temperate or 'wanton,' gustatory or carnal, or even experienced by the eye, the nose, or the ear" (225). Appelbaum further describes the ability to "distinguish between appetites high and low, [which]…connected hunger and desire, the craving of the belly and the

[2] While it is true that Jefferson's life has, more or less, been studied equally, the scholarship surrounding the texts is far more abundant in regard to his public authorship.

passions of the genitalia: food and sex, consumption and copulation" (225). From as far back as Plato, appetites could be referred to as "'bestial,' a part of our 'lower' nature, which we held in common with the beasts" (225). Regardless of its nature, appetite was already a means by which the formation of the self was conceived:

> Whether low or high, the appetite in Western discourse to this point [early seventeenth century] was conceived of as something both internal and external—internal to the self surely, since it was within the embodied self that appetite was experienced, but also external since it was, fundamentally, the other part of the self, that part of the self which was always *other.* (Appelbaum 225-6)

"That part of the self which was always *other,*" is how Appelbaum describes appetite, but perhaps then *other* needs an explanation (226). Appetite is always other than the *self,* or in other words, appetite can be defined separately from its owner. The difference is an important one since one definition describes an internal being while the other depicts an external definition of being. This definition shows the appetite as an attribute not only which one possesses, but also appetite concerns the image projected onto the self by the outside. Appetite can then be seen as the public's interpretation of the private self. This analysis also forces consideration of the difference between a need for procreation and subsistence, and a *desire* to have recreational, non-fertilizing sex and to eat for gustatory pleasure or caprice. The choice involved in the appetite of the patriarch is an essential one because he is not only working toward satisfying a need, but constructing an identity as well.

Despite the fact that eighteenth-century sexual appetite has been defined in terms of individual sexual "acts" rather than "identities," sexual behavior was one factor in forming personal and social identity (Foster xii). Some sexual behavior, even though the behavior itself did not constitute the basis for an individual's identity, could be viewed as "transgressive" or "immoral" and had the potential for "disrupting social authority relations" (xii). Such transgressions have been viewed as, "behaviors rather than a part of a broader personality or deeper psychological essence" (xii). Along those same lines, Michel Foucault describes sexual desire in Greek and Roman antiquity as "simply the appetite that nature had implanted in man's heart for 'beautiful' human beings, whatever their sex might be" (*Pleasure* 188). But this idea of sexual desire resulting in sex "acts" rather than "identities" is not entirely accurate. Through the diffusion of appetite references in various texts the contribution of appetite to the formation of identity becomes apparent.

Moderation and temperance are hallmarks of eighteenth-century patriarchs, especially in terms of appetite. Puritanical values and secular viewpoints formed the main discourses for sex and "manliness" in the first half of the eighteenth century (Foster 176). Fathering children was not only a way in which men could follow their Christian ideals, but also a way to satisfy "manly ideals of sexual virility" (Foster 176). Throughout the eighteenth century, self-control and self-discipline became culturally important to ensure an image of health and temperance (Foster 177). Giving in to sexual appetites "signaled an inner moral weakness or lack of character" (177). Sexual excess was emasculating and brought with it risks of physical depletion (177). Such excess signaled a disregard for the self and "gestured toward nonproductive sexuality, including masturbation and sodomy"

(177). The patriarch, conversely, was expected to moderate the sexual appetite and show self-control to promote good physical and social well-being.

While private texts such as commonplace books helped work out the appropriate level of appetite for a gentleman, the public writing could then be viewed as the result of each author's interpretation of his self in relation to these cultural values. The various writings of Jefferson and Byrd show a deliberate temperance of these appetites divided between the dueling identities of patriarch and libertine. For this reason, both Jefferson and Byrd wrote various public works complete with two versions, or, in Jefferson's case post-edited work, to be understood by future generations in a new way. For these savvy men, what the text says about them is often an underlying subtext in private, public, or coterie texts, written for a specific, known group of readers.

Therefore, by studying private, public, and coterie texts, specific aspects of the writer's identity can be better understood. For example, public texts for eighteenth-century men are demonstrative of their public identities in specific ways. By studying the diffusion of appetite through public texts, readers can understand the public image of a patriarch. These texts, which include political writings, solicited pieces, and public addresses, express an understanding of what was appropriate in the public sphere. These texts can further be explored through the construction of the self in terms of appetite, an area which differs a great deal from the private to the public sphere.

Alternatively, those texts written specifically for the private sphere, or those which can be understood as confidential, show less of a concern for the expectations of others. Private texts are then useful for reflecting ideas to the author, or working out what

exactly this private identity is all about. Texts written within the exclusivity of the private sphere include commonplace books, personal letters, diaries and record books, and scrapbooks. These texts may show experimentation on the part of the author in order to try to understand how best to traverse the different communities of discourse.

Finally, coterie texts, or texts written with a specific group in mind, attempt to navigate between the two dichotomies of public and private spheres in order to find the appropriate level of discourse for that group. Coterie texts are more specific to the needs of the group, including a temperance of sexual and culinary appetite where appropriate. In terms of appetite, these texts differ according to purpose, audience, and most importantly in terms of the author's projected identity within their composition.

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William Byrd of Westover (1674-1744) was a well-known Virginia aristocrat and founder of Richmond. Byrd is notorious for his secret diaries and his voracious sexual appetite, but is studied in few contexts besides those of depravity. He was politically active in his home state of Virginia, serving as a member of the House of Burgesses and the Council of Virginia and as the Virginia representative to the commission charged with establishing the border between Virginia and the Carolinas. Byrd is best known for his *Secret Diaries*, which offer historians daily records that "have offered modern readers an unparalleled glimpse into the private life of a Virginia gentleman" (Berland et al. 3).

William Byrd lived a privileged life. As a lawyer and son born into the planter class of colonial America, Byrd had numerous privileges unimagined to many of those in the Westover area of Virginia. Like his father, Byrd maintained the family estate in Virginia and held several political offices during his time in America. He was receiver-general of Virginia, in addition to other appointments, but Byrd's true passion was to one day become Governor of Virginia, for which he constantly campaigned and was perpetually rejected. He wrote prolifically in his coded, private diaries (published as the *Secret Diaries)*, in letters to friends, in a secret version of his famous account of *The History of the Dividing Line between Virginia and the Carolina.* In the margins of one of his books he wrote a "sexual lexicography," and he wrote in a commonplace book, as was the fashion for educated men and women at the time. In Byrd's status as a patriarch, he represents a portion of the population that was expected to uphold ideals of masculinity including maintaining the physical, moral, and economic health of his family. Byrd often circulated his texts around his social circle of friends, which included both prominent members of British society, and London's literary society. Byrd's diaries portray him libertine-like, as a sexual dominator and a finicky eater who was obsessed with chronicling his every morsel. Therefore, Byrd's writing offers a unique glimpse at the ways in which his self image could be defined differently according to its use function as public, private, or coterie use.

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Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) was a contentious individual, in fact, he was such a controversial person that no one can decide on a definitive characterization of him. Indeed, the past depiction of Jefferson as patriarch, political figure, and American hero do not fully encapsulate what it meant to be Thomas Jefferson. Like all categories, whether they are of character, political partisanship, or family role, these descriptions are inadequate to describe a man who is now affectionately known for his appetite for freedom, food, and love. Indeed, Jefferson is widely accepted to be America's first gourmand and was the first American president to have a sexual scandal in office. In light of these characterizations and in light of the fluidity of male identity in the eighteenth century, Jefferson could aptly be described as patriarch, political figure, and libertine.

Thomas Jefferson was born to a prestigious family in Virginia, thus securing his role of patriarch later in life. Perhaps because of his father's scant education, Jefferson pushed himself to excel academically and intellectually, learning both Latin and Greek as a boy. He was, like many Virginia gentlemen, a practiced musician and horseman. He was later trained as a lawyer at the College of William and Mary. Yet, following in the footsteps of his father, he was elected to many political offices including the third president of the United States, Delegate for Virginia to the Second Continental Congress, member of the House of Burgesses, Governor of Virginia, first Secretary of State of the United States, and Minister to France. He was also an amateur naturalist who understood that, "vegetables are mediately or immediately the food of every animal" (*Notes* 35 or "Complete" 595). Jefferson developed a love for expensive wine while acting as Minister to France and throughout his life refined a taste for fine, expensive furniture and goods. His love for food was so complete that he even paid for one of his slaves to be instructed

in the art of French cuisine, allowing him to have the finest food wherever he traveled. His farm, Monticello, was an extraordinary example of vegetative diversity where Jefferson's chefs could select the finest ingredients to use in his meals.

In 1981, archaeologists excavated Jefferson's estate, Monticello, and uncovered a virtual treasure trove of culinary history. Jefferson's estate cultivated a variety of plant species, many of which were introduced from across the pond for the sole purpose of culinary variety. "Jefferson's gardens at Monticello were a botanic laboratory of ornamental and useful plants from around the world. [He] grew over 170 fruit varieties including apples, peaches, and grapes in Monticello's two orchards…[and] cultivated over 330 vegetable varieties in Monticello's 1000-foot-long garden terrace" ("House"). As is evidenced both by this description and by Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson fulfilled the patriarchal requirement of a "well-rounded" man with "refined sensibilities." Jefferson is also known for sketching what would become the model for the field plow and various other useful tools in two little-known texts of his simply titled the farm and garden books, which acted like diaries and record books to maintain his and his family's economic health.

In consideration of economic health, the plantation and estate excavations can tell us about Jefferson's characterization as patriarch. McWilliams cites the incidents of slaves stealing food from their masters, of masters "gifting" food to their slaves, and finally of slaves procuring their food in other ways to assure subsistence. McWilliams describes the power structure between the plantation owners and the slaves by comparing their consumption of meat as, "Living High and Low on the Hog in the Chesapeake Bay

Region" (89). The delegation of superior cuts of meat to the owner and his family is contrasted with an image of slaves boiling the pig's feet or head to procure what little morsels were left. When cuts from "high on the hog" are found in the Monticello excavation, McWilliams's explanation is simply that the slaves cleaned up after the master's meal, sucking what meat was left from the bones. Slave meat consumption consisted of the following: Domestic pig 30%, (cranial fragments, lumbar vertebrae, ribs, and sternums); Beef 5%, (worn-down oxen from the plantation); Sheep (jaws and other cast-offs); and small amounts of horse, mule, deer, duck, opossum, rabbit, turkey, quail, and chickens (McWilliams 118). These figures are important to establishing Jefferson's stake in the physical health of his slaves as well as the hierarchy that existed at Monticello.

Although not uncommon, the solidification of a social hierarchy at Jefferson's plantation reinforces his role as patriarch. Furthermore, Jefferson's expense at keeping the slaves demonstrates what documents in his farm book confirm, which is that the number of slaves on Jefferson's estates increased over the years. While not definitive, we can also speculate that his slaves were moderately well-treated based on the excavations in conjunction with the recorded ages in his records. It was truly economically significant not only to acquire more property, in this case slaves, but it is also more prudent to maintain the slaves on site so as not to require spending more money later to purchase additional slaves. In fact, many of the slaves who worked for Jefferson had been acquired through an inheritance from Martha's father's estate. One such slave acquired by Jefferson, and reportedly fathered by her master, was Martha's possible half-sister, Sally Hemings (Kukla 118). Jefferson owned hundreds of slaves, but he made one slave, Sally

Hemings, his mistress and likely the mother of his children (Kukla 68). Slaves, as subordinates, were at the "master's dispositions" which allowed him to make "sexual objects" of them (*Pleasure* 215-6). Sex was thought to be essential to good health, and sex with a subordinate is expected if we consider his status as a patriarch and wealthy land owner (Kukla 129). [3]

While Jefferson was an important figure in his own time, it was not in the same legendary sense we know now. During the time he drafted the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson was a popular man, and a hero to some, but he later became a controversial figure after his scandalous acts of indiscretion were revealed during his presidency. Consequently, his writings reflect both the ambitions of the limelight and the curses of the controversial, somewhat teetering his personality between hero and rogue. In terms of Jefferson's appetite, he took a mistress, had several affairs with married women, and he also propagated his love of food. It is Jefferson's status in both regards, of womanizer and also of gourmand, which reflects the diffusion of appetite throughout his writing. It is through the study of Jefferson's writing that we can identify specific aspects of his identity such as the role of appetite in its composition.

Thomas Jefferson's political power distinguishes him from Byrd. This leader of a new nation endured criticism, but also enjoyed an identity which allowed him freedom to pursue his appetite. Jefferson's position of notoriety led him to be a womanizer, though not always in ways which were deemed unfavorable to his peers. He enjoyed food, and

[3] According to Swiss medical theorist Samuel Auguste David Tissot, whose medical works Jefferson owned in his extensive library, old age could be fended off through diet, exercise, and regular sex (Kukla 129).

filled his plantation with an assortment of curiosities, perhaps as a way to know the world as a patriarch was expected to know it.

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This discussion of the private, public, and coterie texts of Thomas Jefferson and William Byrd II will examine the acknowledgement of appetite as it works to construct identity. The thesis is divided into two main sections, "Chapter One: Privately Libertine" and "Chapter Two: Public Passions." Each section is subdivided by author.

Through an examination of the texts of William Byrd II and Thomas Jefferson, I consider appetite as an instrument of self-construction in relation to two poles of male identity: the patriarch and the libertine. Byrd and Jefferson's public images as patriarchs are complicated by an examination of their private texts which reveal a decidedly libertine tendency. These two men compose texts (and personae) relative to socially accepted notions of appetite.

Chapter One discusses the composition of works written for introspective purposes, arguably private works—commonplace books, scrapbooks, diaries, and letters—in an effort to distinguish the ways in which appetite operates in the construction of self. In coterie writings produced for intimate audiences, these men display intemperance while also acknowledging public scrutiny. This representation of appetite in a range of texts demonstrates a privately libertine identity.

Chapter Two argues that the representation of passion (which can be seen as a corollary to appetite) in public texts is performed to show a disciplined persona. To demonstrate control over appetite, Byrd and Jefferson, when writing for the public sphere, present passionate topics in a cavalier way. This presentation of public works creates personae of temperance which differs greatly from the represented selves established in their private writings.

Privately Libertine

In this chapter, I discuss the composition of works written for introspective purposes, arguably private works—commonplace books, scrapbooks, diaries, and letters—in an effort to distinguish the ways in which appetites operate in the construction of self. In their writings produced for an intimate audience, these men display intemperance while also acknowledging public scrutiny. This representation of appetite in a range of texts demonstrates a privately libertine identity. In this chapter I will argue that Jefferson and Byrd display privately libertine identities which are formed in regard to an ideal of moderation of appetite, which is apparent throughout their private texts. This chapter will examine private texts by Byrd and Jefferson which may be separated into four main categories: commonplace books, scrapbooks, diaries, and letters.

Private texts such as the commonplace book, scrapbooks, diaries, and letters are all forms of composition which grew out of an increasing tendency for private introspection during the seventeenth century (Hunter 303). Private writing began as a way to "read" one's life for better understanding on the road to salvation (303). Unlike in their public writing and contrary to the patriarchal ideal, these men display intemperance while also acknowledging public scrutiny. This "analytical" and "extensive" desire to catalog the self comes from a Puritanical devotion to piety and reflection (304). For Jefferson and Byrd, private writing demonstrates the examination of each man's identity in terms of social expectations related to their identity as patriarchs.

The commonplace book is a genre of writing which was prevalent from the Renaissance through the eighteenth century, in which the author quoted from,

summarized, or paraphrased important passages from classic literature (Lockridge 1). For both Byrd and Jefferson, the commonplace book illustrates the difficulty in balancing the contending demands between public and private life, politeness and passion, self-control and licentiousness as "a constant instrument of self-fashioning" (Lockridge 1). It is described as, "[a] book in which things to be remembered are ranged under general heads" (Berland 4). The tradition of memorizing classical rhetorical passages, made possible by studying from the commonplace, was one way in which "morally sound" men could engage in rhetorical battles (Lockridge 1). This classical method of argumentation also incorporated personal observations about popular debates which gentlemen were expected to know (Lockridge 2). A book such as this one might be carried in one's breast pocket and referred to when needed, often being read aloud. It might also contain miscellaneous information concerning anecdotes, jokes, and/or recipes. Essentially, commonplace books are a collection of thoughts about various subjects which taken as a collection, may be analyzed in order to understand the socio-cultural construction of identity.

Like commonplace books, scrapbooks are a form of anthology which transfers the role of authorship from the writer of individual texts to their compiler (Price 3). This collaboration encourages the interpretation of texts written by someone else as they are being anthologized in order to acquire new meaning (3). Using texts in his own way, a scrapbook composer may anthologize his ideas about a particular topic by arranging poems, quotes, songs, or passages in a significant way (Gross 4). Anthologies such as the scrapbook are of particular interest during the eighteenth century when understandings of authorship were changing (Price 3). This notion of authorship is particularly intriguing in

Jefferson's case since evidence suggests that his scrapbooks were under constant revision and construction (Gross 3). At least two different numbering systems survive in their current form, but alterations to the texts and categories within the books imply an ongoing shift in structure (Gross 3).

Like scrapbooks and commonplace books, diaries contain privately composed passages about family, politics, and personal observations in regard to everyday life. Diaries are mainly distinguished from other private texts by the sometimes secretive nature of their composition. While the audience of private texts is usually exclusive to oneself or perhaps a recipient, diaries may include secretive topics not suitable for an audience (Hunter 304). Due to the sensitive nature of diaries' contents and common methods for keeping them, we can surmise that in their early history they were not created for posterity (304). Furthermore, because of the sometimes secretive nature of diaries, there may have been some pressure to destroy them for the preservation of privacy (304). These documents rely heavily on the author's life rather than drawing from classical literature, philosophy, and theology as the commonplace books often do. Whereas commonplace books are sometimes carried daily to jot down observations on popular topics suitable for conversation in public, diaries contain anecdotes not for public discourse at all. Instead, reflections on the author's economic, personal, or political well-being are documented for his own use (304). Keeping diaries meant that it was possible to revisit entries from days, months, or even years in the past. By monitoring passages, it was possible to track "one's progress, to discover patterns of life that could reveal providential meanings, or indicate the divine plan for an individual life" in a "confessional model" (305, 308).Thus, the diary gives readers a glimpse of the author's

perceived path to godliness and adherence to the moral or social codes by tracking progress and transgressions not appropriate for public utterances.

Personal letters offer a glimpse of characterization unique to the private realm and useful in the construction of identity of its authors where "self-presentation [was] assumed" (Hunter 312). Not unlike diaries, personal letters assume a certain level of confidentiality between letter writers and their recipients. Because mail was often intercepted and read before reaching its intended destination, letter writing sometimes employed a veiled language or even used cipher to maintain privacy (Davies 216). While letters were sometimes refined and redistributed for more public venues, personal letters belong to a category of writing which is essentially intimate (Hunter 312).[4] If private texts such as letters serve as a way in which letter writers are purposefully constructing an identity for the letter reader, private texts, like letters, allow modern readers to analyze the identity projected by authors. These private works become vital to understanding the construction of self, which is contingent upon the author's interpretation of the venue in which he or she is writing. The representation of appetite in various genres then becomes a way to gauge appropriate communities of discourse.

Byrd's Private Works

Byrd is best-known for having written a collection of *Secret Diaries*: 1709-1712, 1717-1721, and 1739-1741, all written in adapted shorthand. As described by Kevin Berland, "These diaries reveal a powerful tension between Byrd's private sense of self

[4] Paul Hunter writes that this new usage of letters bridged private and public discourse by taking essentially private writings and altering them for public distribution. This change, he argues, lays the groundwork for the novel (312).

and his sense of the appearance of the self in the public sphere" (3). Byrd reveals very intimate matters in an indifferent tone such as problems with hemorrhoids, marital quarrels, and sexually explicit details of his wife, Lucy Parke. He notes almost daily whether or not he prayed, or if he forgot to pray. Scandalous accounts such as his sexual encounters as a widower in London are also listed like items on a grocery list, with an apparent lack of emotions (Conlin 128). Indeed, entries often portray Byrd's acknowledgment of behavior he knows to be sinful, and then acknowledges that he should request God's forgiveness. Through the study of Byrd's private texts in opposition to his others, it is possible to identify the ways in which these texts worked out the appropriate discourse for Byrd's self-construction.

Byrd's lifelong desire to be Governor of Virginia, his sexual relationship with his wife and his sexual appetite, and his obsession with food are all areas in which the content of his texts changes to suit the audience and the persona he wishes to portray for that audience. "An individual [in the eighteenth century] may perceive a need for specific elements in his identity, may seek them out, and may endeavor to incorporate them into the 'performance' of his daily life. In Byrd's day, such an effort would be supported, arguably required, by the duty of self-examination and improvement" (Berland et al. 80). His more secretive, libertine self-construction exists in the intimate world of private texts, and reading the private texts complicates the representation of Byrd as a patriarch in public writing.

An alternative interpretation of Byrd's commonplace book as a tool for self-fashioning has been offered by Kenneth Lockridge, who sees the central issue of Byrd's

identity as his endlessly frustrated pursuit of the office of governor of Virginia. For Lockridge, the identity work being performed in Byrd's commonplace book is a process of accepting his own political insignificance:

> By the midpoint in the commonplace book, Byrd's adjustment to a lesser political role is proceeding nicely. Quotations reflecting political rage and thoughts of vengeance are fading into calm acceptance of the self. But Byrd's parallel adjustment to his unsuccessful relationships with women remains involved with related issues, with old age and with declining sexual powers, and here the process of adjustment becomes more traumatic. (Berland et al. 104)

Lockridge dismisses Byrd's political goals as a yearning to mimic his own father's greatness. He describes the connection between identity and his political decline. Although Lockridge's instinct to read Byrd's "acceptance of self" through his usage of the commonplace book is justified, the "rage" and "trauma" that Lockridge interprets are perhaps a bit unwarranted. The roles of sexuality, age, and relationships all share a portion of the blame for Byrd's identity crisis according to Lockridge, but never does Lockridge discuss the possibility that these identity issues are themselves the cause of his malcontent, or rather, that the control he exerts over portions of his life is a substitute for the things he most desires control of, but which escape his hold. As I will show, Byrd's private texts display the desire for sexual, gustatory, and political liberty of a libertine. Through his writing we are made aware of this division between his publically presented self and his privately observable identification as libertine.

In a letter to Charles Boyle, Earl of Orrery, Byrd shows a brief concern for overconsumption and the grace to use "good things temperately," but more than apologizing for consumption, as he perhaps should be, he is describing the ways in which he cannot help but "devour" in order to gain political office:

> Our land produces all the fine things of Paradise, except innocence and the tree of life; and these we should have in some measure, if we had the grace to use our other good things temperately. If we could content ourselves with a farinaceous dyet, and not devour our fellow-creaturs so unmercifully (qtd. in Mulford 533).

Byrd compares the temperance of his "consumption," perhaps in reference to his sexual appetite with that of the food consumed, which in his case, as was common for his status, is primarily meat. Furthermore, Byrd shows that he understands temperance to be a desirable attribute, although he suggests that only through "grace" can man be expected to act in such a modest fashion. By assigning divinity the liability to forgive Byrd's intemperance, he dismisses any individual blame for indiscretion. Since this letter could be used in order to build Byrd's image to Boyle, who could potentially aid in Byrd's political aspirations, he could also be using this letter to justify the excesses which Boyle found necessary to attain his status, thus reinforcing Byrd as a comrade to his political aim.

In Byrd's private writing he repeatedly lists the details of his sex life with his wife, his self, and with others. The following entries are but a smattering of instances where Byrd not only catalogues his sexual deeds, but he reveals an awareness of the

rhetoric used to construct the entries. Byrd's acts can then expose him as the previously described sexual libertine, not because he has sexual relations with his wife, but because of his attitude toward it, the frequency, and other indulgent attributes yet to be discussed. Byrd writes in his *Secret Diary*: "December 14, 1710: I gave my wife a flourish, notwithstanding she was indisposed" (118). Although this entry seems inane enough, when carefully examined it shows a side to Byrd separate from that of his public image. In this passage, Byrd has just returned home from a trip because his wife has been ill. Upon seeing that she has slightly improved, he takes advantage of his good fortune and gives her a "flourish" which leaves her again, "indisposed." Byrd's use of delicate language here with "flourish" suggests their sex was innocent and delicate, which is perhaps congruent with the next portion in which he confesses that his wife is still indisposed "notwithstanding" his efforts. Rather, this rationalization that Byrd describes allows him to act on his wife and dominate her without real regard to her except as a prop and sexual object.

A second diary entry again allows Byrd to use language in order to paint the picture of his self as he desires: "December 21, 1710: I neglected to say my prayers and had good health, good thoughts, but indifferent humor. However I rogered my wife when we got to bed" (120). Here, Byrd's "rogering" of his wife is written using a slang term for copulation, which makes it seem like he tricked her into the act, or at the very least she was not a part of the process. In both of these examples, Byrd is acting on his wife, they are not acting together. Byrd seems to say that he has been good in some ways, "good health" and "good thoughts," but was negligent or remiss in other duties like the line "neglected to say my prayers" and the description of his "indifferent humor." The term

neglected is especially weighted here since he does not say he forgot to say his prayers, nor does he appear sorry for having "neglected" that part of his duty. Rather, he takes the same amount of time he could now be praying, and instead writes that he "neglected" to do so. Prayers, humor, and sex here balance out the gentlemanly parts of Byrd's identity in this entry and establish what I call a "privately libertine" Byrd in opposition to his public image as patriarch.

Byrd's propensity for sex and cataloguing his life in his *Secret Diaries* includes women other than his wife. When examining his diary it is interesting to note his behavior as he interprets it in his writing. One fascinating instance that illustrates this point is catalogued by Byrd in a *Secret Diary* entry for November 2, 1709:

> ...In the evening I went to Dr. [Barret's] where my wife came this afternoon. Here I found Mrs. Chiswell, my sister Custis, and other ladies. We sat and talked till about 11 o'clock and then returned to our chambers. I played at [unreadable] with Mrs. Chiswell and kissed her on the bed till she was angry and my wife also was uneasy about it, and cried as soon as the company was gone. I neglected to say my prayers, which I should not have done, because I ought to beg pardon for the lust I have for another man's wife. However I had good health, good thoughts, and good humor, thanks be to God Almighty. (46)

In many instances such as this one cited by scholars of Byrd, with the notable exception of Conlin, we read about his infidelity, his sexual appetite, and his misogynistic ways in his private texts. Appetite, as we recall Appelbaum's words, is "hunger and desire, the

craving of the belly and the passions of the genitalia: food and sex, consumption and copulation" (225). Here, Byrd takes advantage of his wife's friend without having considered anyone else's feelings or the consequences of his actions. The way this entry is written does not initially even acknowledge that his wife is nearby until he says, "my wife was also uneasy about it." It is this type of reckless debauchery that made privately insatiable appetites a problem for the public sphere. This subtle difference between Byrd's assertions that he should be apologetic and his actual thoughts of not being in "good humor" illustrate his negotiation of what is appropriate in the private sphere. If he had truly regretted his actions or thought them inappropriate he would have been remorseful, which he clearly is not. Byrd's choice to kiss another man's wife moves his privately libertine self into the public by accosting a woman who does not appreciate his advances. The relationship with the other man, and consequently with other men in general, may be in jeopardy because of Byrd's private indiscretion. He goes on to say that he "ought to beg pardon for the lust I have for another man's wife" since he understands that kissing another man's wife is supposed to be wrong according to social norms. However, Byrd does not admit feelings of regret or guilt. Rather, he acknowledges that there is a standard which he has broken, and as he understands it, asking for forgiveness is the way to erase his misbehavior. For Byrd, he is attempting to navigate under what conditions he has gone too far. By testing the waters and quietly pursuing relationships while his wife is in the next room, Byrd attempts to remain privately libertine. Private writing such as this is integral to understanding the way sexual appetite helped to shape the identity of gentlemen in the eighteenth century.

In addition to sexual escapades with his wife and other women, Byrd also logs masturbation in his diary. Byrd's cataloging of sexual escapades coupled with his forgiveness requests shows an understanding that he should want to be forgiven for his acts, which, unlike those which created public dissonance such as kissing Mrs. Chiswell, are essentially private. A typical example comes from a *Secret Diary* entry for October 23, 1710:

> …About 9 o'clock I went to wait on the Governor, where I found Colonel Custis. I read my proposal about naval stores to the Governor and he approved of it. Then we went to court. I sat a little while and then returned to my lodgings and prepared my public accounts and continued at them till 3 o'clock…I said my prayers, but I committed uncleanness, for which God forgive me. However I had good health and good humor, thank God Almighty. (106)

By carefully choosing his words, Byrd sidesteps the guilt associated with sin and goes straight to forgiveness. He does not say he is sorry for his transgressions, or even for that matter that they are sinful. What Byrd carefully writes is that he "committed uncleanness" not that he was sinful. By "committing" uncleanness Byrd reinforces the notion that sexuality was understood in terms of "acts" rather than as a part of the "actor's" personality. By treating it as an "act" of "uncleanness," Byrd divorces himself from the blame while also acknowledging that this act is a transgression. By pointing out what the transgression is and implying that he *should* be forgiven, Byrd eliminates passing judgment on himself. The reader cannot determine if Byrd himself thinks that this

act is unclean, or indeed if it warrants asking for forgiveness. Byrd as his own reader would surely assume that he had fulfilled the requirement for forgiveness by confessing in his diary, and then acknowledging that he should ask for forgiveness. Byrd is not writing for an audience in this passage, but rather he is reinforcing his own notion of self, and therefore developing his self as a man with strong sexual desires who masturbates to quell them. In this way, the Byrd who may peruse this section of his diary at a later date for personal, moral guidance can see that indeed this "act" of transgression, although it is not "clean," does not reflect badly on his identity, but would merely appear as a bump in the road to salvation.

What seems to be the overall theme of Byrd's most secret text is the recreational attitude toward sex. In one of the books from Byrd's estate, a supplement was discovered which had been hand-written in the margins by Byrd. The book was *Le Dictionnaire des Arts et des Sciences* and the supplement was a *Sexual Lexicography* written in a cryptic combination of French and Latin. Berland writes that, "Byrd's Supplement offers a rich body of new evidence about the private life of an individual whose habit of documenting his erotic adventures has already provided a window into eighteenth-century sexuality" (2). The significance this text has in regard to Byrd's feelings toward sex, appetites, and women is paramount. Berland claims that the entries show an inner struggle for Byrd, which reportedly dismayed and excited him alternately: "he was alarmed by the way his passions overcame his reason, leaving him at the mercy of appetite" (2). This appetite was a part of the identity of the eighteenth-century gentleman, but as earlier discussed a libertine appetite is one which is being indulged, rather than repressed in a patriarchal manner. Byrd's *Sexual Lexicography* was not only hidden in the margins of a book on

science, a book that would have been used to further his identity as a patriarch, but the supplement itself was coded in a way that made it nearly indecipherable to anyone who might stumble upon it. Clearly then, the ideas put forth in such a secretive manner would have straddled the realms of acceptability and gluttony. An appetite that lacked control could spell disaster for public identity and end in humiliation for the ravenous.

In terms of identity, the *Sexual Lexicography* has been little studied. Essentially, the *Sexual Lexicography,* which is really a made-up dictionary for sexual terms, examines the ways in which sex can be recreational and vulgar—but it is no *Kama Sutra.* From the records he kept in his daily diaries, he makes no bones about citing his usual escapades with prostitutes, but in the diaries Byrd also acknowledges his transgressions unlike in the lexicography. Berland writes, "his 'London Diary' registers occasions on which Byrd 'rogered' his mistress, disported himself with loose women in bagnios, picked up streetwalkers, and compelled his servant Annie to caress him to orgasm, a vigorous though conventional range of libertine heterosexual activities'" (2-3). However in the Supplement, Byrd does not acknowledge that he has participated in the acts he describes. For example, in some of Byrd's entries in the Supplement, he describes homosexual acts such as the first entry's description, "*Acculer, a tergo anum petere, cum puero sodomitiee rem habere,*" which is translated as, "To have anal sex. Penetrating the anus, to fuck (to sodomize) a boy" (Berland 4). This suggests that perhaps Byrd's appetite did not stop with prostitutes, streetwalkers, his lady servants, loose women, and his wife. As a typical entry states: "*Corbeillon, cunnus. Changement de Corbeillon reveille l'appetit*" or, "Vagina (literally, a wicker basket) 'A change of corbeillon revives the appetite'" (Berland 6). While it cannot be assumed that Byrd did participate in all of the sexual

activities he describes, it is also not exactly the point. Rather, the excessive appetite exhibited by composing this secret Supplement with its illicit acts demonstrates a self separate from that of Byrd's publically recognized identity. Despite the fact that Byrd was not a perfect gentleman to begin with and was sometimes caught performing libertine acts, his privately libertine self exists on an elevated level in his private discourse. Furthermore, the hidden nature of the lexicography demonstrates its forbidden, libertine nature.

For a patriarch, it would have been essential for Byrd to exert his masculinity, which also equated to participating in sex for procreation purposes, but not excessively or necessarily in an illicit manner. Recreational sex is one area in which anal sex would be preferred to coitus, because there would be no mistaking anal sex for productive sex. Viewing Byrd's sexual descriptions with an overarching sense of recreational or libertine appetite, we can see the cause for a large number of illicit sexual acts, some of which were illegal both in England and in America until the 1860s.[5] Berland reminds us that these entries were written in code for Byrd's eyes alone, and that he never mentions having anal or oral sex with women, nor does he mention men in a sexually charged way. Here, Berland seems to be saying that Byrd did not engage in any of these activities. However, the fact that Byrd did not assign gender to many of the acts he describes simply shows that he is treating the list as a description of "acts," which we have already discussed as being congruent with eighteenth-century notions of sexuality. Byrd is never identified in the supplement, nor does he admit to participating in any of the acts listed.

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5 Although technically sodomy was illegal, most of the time it was not pursued in court cases unless another crime had been committed such as rape or buggery (Foster 157).

Instead, this text works more like a secret well of knowledge or hidden reference guide, perhaps for Byrd to determine how much he knew about these prohibited acts. Regardless of their purpose initially, this listing functions as a means by which sexual acts could be compartmentalized or defined, compared and contrasted, understood and studied as part of Byrd's identity.

When read as a collection of entries, Byrd's *Secret Diaries* do less to show his political or even sexual propensity than to show his gustatory preoccupation. It is not as though the political and sexual self are exaggerated by scholars, but rather that the gustatory indulgence has yet to be discussed in a significant way. Rather, editors Louis Wright and Marion Tinling admit to having shortened the entries in Byrd's 1709-1712 diary, saying "limitations of space have made it necessary to delete many repetitive passages that are sometimes amusing by reason of their sheer repetition in Byrd's daily routine," of which many were almost certainly passages about food, as they are the most repetitive passages (2). They apologetically explain that, "it is hoped that enough remains to give the flavor of day-to-day existence in the colony of Virginia" (2). Clearly, Wright and Tinling do not see much worth in the observations of Byrd's diet, despite the fact that their own language in using "flavor" to characterize "day-to-day existence" actually implements this same use of appetite inspired language. Rather, the editors flirt with the idea of this discussion, rather than acknowledging it fully. They continue by saying that, "one could wish that he had told more about what he was thinking and said less about what he ate everyday…, but we must be thankful for the details that he does provide" (6). The editors are seemingly on the verge of an important discovery when they speak in general terms of Byrd's daily routine that it, "gives to the modern reader an impression of

the triviality that occupied so much of fashionable life in eighteenth-century England" (5). Indeed, the socio-cultural construction of gentlemen in eighteenth-century American as well, concerned these "trivialities."

A survey of a randomly picked month, December of 1710, can show that, while sexual appetite is what the scholars discuss, Byrd mentions sex—in one way or another—only 26% of the time in his diaries. On the other hand however, Byrd mentions food—another triviality to be sure—approximately 62% of the time, based on a two meal per day calculation thought to be accurate for the time period. This typical accounting for Byrd's cataloguing is not by any means comprehensive—it accounts for only one month of his *Secret Diaries*—but it does show a disparity in the scholarship. Byrd obviously demonstrates that food is an important enough topic to discuss, at least as much as his religion. For Byrd, food is constantly, provocatively a theme of his discourse.

Byrd's *Commonplace Book* also exhibits his culinary obsessions, despite the only slight attention he pays them in his *History* written at about the same time.[6] Byrd's *Commonplace Book,* although not dated, has been determined to have been written between the years 1721-1726, based on dated handwriting samples and based on certain occurrences which can reliably date portions of the text. The one surviving commonplace book of Byrd's, as described here, contains entries typical to other commonplace books, while also including subjects more closely related to those in Byrd's *Secret Diaries*. Like his other private works, Byrd's writing is full of sexual escapades and thorough

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6 *The History of the Dividing Line between Virginia and North Carolina* and *The Secret History of the Dividing Line*

descriptions of food. This last is seemingly lost on the editors of the work, despite their use of it in an example:

> Unless a reader were to search the secret diaries of William Byrd II for just such a thing, it might be easy to overlook what is written there about the way he used his commonplace book:
>
> > I rose about 7 o'clock and wrote a little in my commonplace. I said my prayers and ate milk and potato for breakfast.
> >
> > I rose about 7 o'clock and read a little in my commonplace. I ate some boiled milk for breakfast and said a short prayer. (3)

Though the editors cite these examples to give the reader a sense of repetition and Byrd's habit of using the *Commonplace Book*, they fail to recognize any significance for his cataloguing of meals. Such an attention to gastronomy does not occupy the pages of Byrd's public writing in this way, suggesting an acknowledgement of appropriate content for the public sphere which does not incorporate food.

Joseph Conlin describes the oddities of Byrd's diet as indebted to George Cheyne, a noted physician and friend of Byrd's. Conlin writes in his essay "Another Side to William Byrd of Westover," "throughout his [Byrd's] life he ate only one dish at a meal, a curious custom based on one of Cheyne's 'tips,' and religiously followed Cheyne's celebrated 'milk diet'" (131). This "milk diet" was implemented as a way to combat an overconsumption of meat-eating as was the habit of affluent eighteenth-century Englishmen, according to Conlin. He believes that these oddities are responsible for the

devotion Byrd pays to recording his eating habits, and not appetite. However, the specific milk diet of which Conlin speaks was meant for only the most intense cases of indulgence (Shapin 12). While Byrd never completely gave meat up, he seemed to liken himself to the more indulgent patients of Cheyne who ate a great deal of asses' milk, often in place of meat. One typical meal example, which perhaps shows Byrd's indecision of his voracious status, includes both ham and milk. Byrd writes, "The way to make a Ham eat in perfection, is to steep it [...] in Milk and water" (Berland et al. 124). Often, though, Byrd would eat only a meal of asses' milk as Cheyne prescribed for only his most difficult cases. This extreme diet, consisting only of asses' milk and seeds (rice barley, sago, and bread) was for those about whom Cheyne felt "hunger was the best medicine" (Shapin 12). Indeed, at some points in Byrd's diary either he feels that this "hunger" is necessary or Cheyne does—it is not clear. What is clear is that Byrd paid a great amount of attention to his diet, and thus afforded it a great deal of influence in terms of his overall "appetite", but only in the writing meant for his personal use.

Jefferson's Private Works

Jefferson's lifelong dedication to public service, his intimate relationship with his wife and romantic associations with other women, along with his obsession with food are all areas in which the content of his texts changes to suit his audience and sense of appropriate self-presentation. Though the editors of Byrd's *Commonplace Book* make an important observation which is applicable to Jefferson as well: "An individual [in the eighteenth century] may perceive a need for specific elements in his identity, may seek them out, and may endeavor to incorporate them into the 'performance' of his daily life"

(Berland et al. 80). The existence of a secretive, libertine self-construction exists in the intimate world of Jefferson's private texts, though to a much lesser extent than with Byrd. While this occasional "privately libertine" construction is not as pronounced as in Byrd's writing, certain biographical information and careful reading allows it to be shown. Thus, Jefferson's private writing too creates a problematic representation of him as a patriarch in conjunction with biographical information.

Jefferson was a private man. Although he lived his life in the public eye, he did not live like a man for whom the limelight was a temptation. Unlike Byrd's hunger for political office, Jefferson was sometimes thrust into roles for which he did not campaign. In order to ensure his privacy during times of celebrity, he burned the intimate letters that he and his wife, Martha, wrote to one another. In fact, only three pieces of Martha's writing exist today because of Jefferson's resolve that their family secrets would not be divulged to the general public. Publically, Jefferson depicted an image of a patriarch, but in his personal time he enjoyed romantic or sexually charged works such as Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* and *Tristram Shandy,* which he studied with Martha during her life, and which he later quoted in suggestive letters to Maria Cosway (Gross 330).[7] After the death of Martha, Jefferson never remarried, but rather romanced married and widowed women like Maria Cosway and a host of others including Martha Jefferson's biracial slave sister, Sally Hemings (Kukla 120).

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7 Jefferson's purchase of Sterne's sermons in 1765 was "one of the earliest book transactions recorded in Jefferson's life" (qtd. in Gross 181). According to Jonathan Gross, Jefferson kept a copy of *Sentimental Journey* in his breast pocket (181). He also quoted sexually charged excerpts of *Tristram Shandy* to Maria Cosway, one of his mistresses (Ellis 96). Martha Jefferson and he also read and discussed *Tristram Shandy* together (Gross 181). After her death, Jefferson kept a letter Martha had written which quoted the text, but she was apparently too weak to finish (Gross181). Jefferson then sketched in the remainder of the text and carried the letter with a lock of her hair in his pocket until the day he died. The letter is one of the only pieces of Martha's writing not destroyed by Jefferson upon her death (Gross 181).

One private text that can help illustrate Jefferson's intemperance is his *Commonplace Book,* created during his education at the College of William and Mary. Quite remarkably, Jefferson purchased and was fascinated by William Byrd II's *Commonplace Book.* In his biography of Jefferson titled *American Sphinx*, Joseph Ellis describes Jefferson's own commonplacing practices: "Jefferson made copying a creative act, often revising a passage to suit his own taste or, more often, blending his own thoughts on the subject into his notes" (39). While Jefferson may not be alone in adding creativity to the act of commonplacing, it is important to understand that commonplacing is not simply copying, and that these entries may be useful in evaluations of Jefferson's character. Since many of the themes found in commonplace books were meant only for the author's eyes, the private writing in commonplace books is an excellent place to see the construction of identity, and the role played by appetite in the construction of identity, for both Jefferson and Byrd.[8]

Kenneth Lockridge proposes that Jefferson and Byrd are expressing what he calls "patriarchal rage" in their personal, private writings in their commonplace books and insists that these examples give an overall understanding of gender relations between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century men and women. Examples of this commonplacing of supposed rage include Jefferson's recording of the following quotations from his commonplace book: "Yea, men should have begotten children from some other source, no female race existing; thus would no evil ever have fallen on mankind" (Lockridge 68). However, what Lockridge calls "patriarchal rage" was all the *rage* during the time when

8 Even though it has been established that commonplace books were sometimes read aloud, it is unlikely that Jefferson participated in this practice himself. He was terribly embarrassed to speak publically and shied from it whenever possible (Fliegelman 4).

Lockridge is writing. In the above passage, Lockridge explains that this passage is among several others which point to Jefferson's desire for men to procreate without the aid of women (68). However, what Jefferson could be saying by the use of this quotation is that the "source" from which children are produced is the source of evil, not that women are the source of evil. Therefore, Jefferson could be summarizing the way in which desire for sex is not always in relation to procreation, which makes "mankind" sinful and "evil." Indeed Lockridge is right to cite the destructive relationship that both authors had with women, but rather than their obsession with power or underlying rage, perhaps these private writings show the way in which Byrd and Jefferson were trying to understand their relationships with women, both inwardly and out, in relation to sexual appetite and domestic responsibility.

Lockridge's argument hinges on the adolescent grievances of Jefferson, rather than a lifelong issue with women. Lockridge himself admits to this assertion somewhat when he agrees with another author's summation of Jefferson's *Commonplace Book*. Lockridge summarizes Jack McLaughlin, who points out that what has previously been explained as "patriarchal rage" is occurring mostly during adolescence, for Jefferson at least. The period when Jefferson's supposed "rage" was most explicit spanned the time at, or just before, his father's death occurred, and his mother's subsequent control over the estate and the children began. In fact, in Jefferson's *Commonplace Book* he acknowledges such a sentiment of juvenile unhappiness: "You must forgive if one whose heart through youth is violent speaks thoughtlessly. Do not appear to hear him" (102). Rather than being representative of Jefferson's life, these supposedly anger-filled pages show a youthful "Tommy" Jefferson who resents his mother's control over what will

become his estate and what could be labeled "normal" adolescent restlessness. Jefferson seems to be selecting passages that acknowledge his emotional youth (with regard to the overall destructiveness of passion) when he exclaims that the "violent youth" speaks "thoughtlessly."

As Jon Kukla has shown, Jefferson thought of women as seductresses, which led him to befriend only those women whose "female passions" were already domesticated by men (6).[9] Perhaps the most famous example of Jefferson's obsession with "domesticated" women is his relationship with Sally Hemings, but no textual evidence exists for interpretation of that relationship. Maria Cosway, however received a letter from Jefferson which uncharacteristically depicts both emotion and desire. The famous "Head & Heart" letter of October 12, 1786 exemplifies the ways in which Jefferson's "heart" or desire were incompatible with his "head" or adherence to the social code. In his letter, Jefferson's head and heart are in dialog together discussing the repercussions of letting desire decide their fate with Maria:

> *Head.* Well, friend, you seem to be in a pretty trim.
>
> *Heart.* I am indeed the most wretched of all earthly beings. Overwhelmed with grief, every fibre of my frame distended beyond its natural powers to bear, I would willingly meet whatever catastrophe should leave me no more to feel, or to fear.

[9] After one broken heart in adolescence, every woman with whom he was involved was either widowed or married.

> *Head*. These are the eternal consequences of your warmth and precipitation…You confess your follies, indeed; but still you hug and cherish them; and no reformation can be hoped where there is no repentance. (*Life and Selected Writings* 396)

Jefferson's "Head" goes on to describe the "incorrigible" acts which "imprudently engage[ed] [her] affections" while the "Heart" goes on to describe Maria as a "Natural Bridge" whose loveliness would greatly enhance Richmond (398-400). By assigning certain "parts" of his body agency to act on their desires, at least in the letter, Jefferson distances himself from these "imprudent" and "sinful" feelings. However, by writing them out, he forces himself to reiterate both sides of the controversy between "Head" and "Heart." Jefferson is able to "confess [his] follies" intellectually (through his *Head*), while also hugging and cherishing them, presumably in his *Heart*. Jefferson's appetite gets the best of him through the *Heart's* actions, and the *Head* of Jefferson mediates that passion as he deems appropriate. Just like Byrd's act of cataloguing his transgressions in his diary then writing an acknowledgment of his sins by saying that he, "ought to beg pardon," Jefferson is also acknowledging the difference between what he "ought" to do and what he desires (Byrd *Secret Diaries* 46). Jefferson, like Byrd, does not himself deem this behavior as inappropriate, nor does he actually ask for forgiveness, but rather demonstrates an understanding of the social expectations thrust on him. By situating the argument between two separate parts of him, Jefferson demonstrates the internal struggle between what he desires and what he knows to be acceptable.

Problems of the family's concern were privately dealt with by Jefferson including familial conduct. In a letter to his daughter, Patsy, Jefferson described the importance of a romantic couple's secrets, and that those secrets should not be shown to the outside world where intimacies could cause problems for the family: "I now see our fireside formed into a group. No one member of which has a fibre in their composition which can ever produce any jarring or jealousies among us" (qtd. in Gross 177). He continued his marital advice in the newspaper clippings and scrapbooks he sent her, such as the following passage: "Harmony in the marriage state is the very first object to be aimed at…a husband finds his affections wearied out by a constant string of little checks and obstacles" (Gross 177).[10] These passages represent for Jefferson a patriarchal responsibility very different from the passages about women that Lockridge cites. Rather than illustrating a man's weakness in love as in the Maria Cosway letter, Jefferson composes the husband as needing freedom from the wife's "little checks and obstacles" to have a "harmonious" marriage. These two passages also demonstrate the importance of family unity, which is a concern of the patriarch in regard to his image as much as that of his family. Jefferson's "harmonious" and "composed" family reflects upon him as the head of the family as much as his own actions reflect upon them. By advising his family in the patriarchal tradition, Jefferson distinguishes this particular private writing from that of more libertine function such as the letter to Mrs. Cosway.

[10] In his position as patriarch of the entire country, Jefferson was one of the most prolific letter writers of his day. By all accounts, Jefferson averaged from ten to twelve letters a day throughout his life, leaving a legacy of over sixteen thousand letters, many of which have yet to be edited and made available to the general public (Burstein qtd. in Gross 2). As a result of his notoriety and status as an American icon, much of Jefferson's letter writing has been preserved, and is available for examination.

In fact, letters demonstrate Jefferson's attempt to have a private life at all. When Martha was very ill, soon after he had finished drafting the *Declaration*, but before it had been debated in the Continental Congress, he sent a letter requesting to be dismissed from his duty. "I am sorry. The situation of my domestic affairs renders it indispensably necessary that I should solicit the substitution of some other person here. [The] delicacy of the house will not require me to enter minutely into the private causes which render this necessary" (Jefferson qtd. in Ellis 60). At the time, the letter did not describe the dire state that his wife was in, or the complications with her health that had endured for so many years as a result of complications during childbirth. Although he does not explicitly say so, "private causes" which render the "house" to be in a "delicate" state can be reasonably interpreted. Martha could indeed be described as, if not the house itself, certainly the heart of it for Jefferson. Her illness could hardly have been mistaken to anyone in receipt of the letter, and yet Jefferson insists on using vague, veiled language to describe his private life. A request for more information about Martha's "delicate" condition would have been personally insulting to Jefferson. It would have been like asking him to expose his wife to the outside world for their viewing pleasure. Jefferson did not feel the need to divulge his private life, or the couple's secrets to those outside the family, but instead remained secluded at Monticello to focus on Martha and "to indulge in his private cravings" of Madeira (vintage 1770) and his serenity as he had done in previous years during her illnesses or after the death of his mother (Ellis 45). So, when these rare privacies were intruded upon, Jefferson treated them as such, divulging only what he cared to.

As part of his role as patriarch, both for his country and for his family, Jefferson was obligated to uphold a certain moral standard. Jefferson's life after Martha's death made it difficult to adhere to such stringent guidelines for morality. Certainly, parenthood of two girls was not easy for him to navigate. [11] At her request, he promised never to remarry after Martha's death. She did not want another woman to raise her children. But Jefferson's time away from home did not make raising children easy, and in his letters to his daughters the way in which he wishes them to behave is telling. In a May 5, 1787 letter to his daughter Martha, affectionately nicknamed Polly, he wrote a particularly critical example of fatherly advice for the public:

> To play on the harpsichord, to draw, to dance, to read and talk French and such things as will make you more worthy of the love of your friends…Remember too as a constant charge not to go out without your bonnet because it will make you very ugly and then we should not love you so much. (Jefferson qtd. in Ellis 92)

Jefferson's desire for his daughter to be a proper lady seemingly extends past his love for her. This example shows Jefferson's awareness of Polly's public image. Jefferson expresses that he must reinforce to her the importance of her modest image. A bonnet would be cloaking Polly, which in turn shows an appropriately public modesty and racial anxiety over her lady-like fair skin becoming tanned. In sum he says that her ability to be a lady is more important than his love for her. The creation of a lady suitable for his and others' love is of the utmost importance to Jefferson, who here demonstrates that love is

[11] Martha Jefferson died on September 6, 1782 from complication during the birth of their seventh child in ten years of marriage (Ellis 66).

contingent on certain behaviors rather than any natural bonds of paternity. This love is assured only through the proper learning of ladylike things: "To play the harpsichord, to draw, to dance, to read and talk French" will all make Polly worthy of love. Clearly here we can see that Jefferson is concerned with identity, not only his own, but that of his daughters as well. Just as Jefferson was concerned with the repercussions of his affair with Maria Cosway discussed in the *Head and Heart* section, we can surmise that Jefferson is likewise concerned with his own identity as represented by his role as patriarch. Jefferson's awareness of public scrutiny is visible through his education of Polly. Through Polly, Jefferson has an opportunity to enhance his public image or cause it damage, so he must try to maintain her moral compass to ensure his own character.

Jefferson's relationship with his daughters and granddaughters required a level of authority and instruction, which is evident in the scrapbooks he made for them. Scrapbooking was popular during the eighteenth century, and these anthologies offer a unique glimpse of the compiler's taste (Gross 4). Recently, several scrapbooks have made their way into the Thomas Jefferson archive (Gross 2). The scrapbooks were originally thought to have been compiled by Jefferson's granddaughters. But, recent scholarship, including the dating of portions of the scrapbooks and other annotations in Jefferson's handwriting, has brought to light the truth (Gross 3). Indeed, the scrapbooks, which have been dismissed by archivists for years, are collections that Jefferson clipped, compiled, arranged, and treasured as a means of communicating with future generations (Gross 6). General themes such as "Poems of Romantic Love," "Poems of Family," and "Poems of Nation" seem to separate the emotions needed in one area from others, and also separate the scrapbooks in terms of function.

The audience for the scrapbooks is a point of controversy.[12] While some texts were limited in scope to themes like "Poems of Nation," and could arguably be deemed public, "Poems of Family" was more family-oriented in design, and was likely composed with an eye toward advice for his granddaughters and future generations of Jefferson's family. However, "Poems of Romantic Love" is more private in nature than even those parts of "Poems of Family" although both give Jefferson's marital advice to his daughters and granddaughters. Since the format of this book deals with different aspects of romantic love, it offers a unique glimpse at Jefferson's ideas about sensuality in terms of what he deemed acceptable for his granddaughters to know. Furthermore, these texts reveal Jefferson's interest in erotic love, at least in relation to his "authorship" of the collection.

Jefferson's scrapbooks are full of poems with titles like "The Ladies' Man" which attempt to satirize or offer a perspective on libertinism. The poem begins: "Not all the favors Coquettes shew,/And smiles the Fop is heir to,/Could tempt me to become a Beau,/And feel as Beaux appear to" (qtd. in Gross 188: 1-4). Thomas Moore's "libertine poems" were another favorite of Jefferson's, despite Moore's writing against Jefferson's relationship with his slave, Sally Hemings. However, Jefferson clipped at least ten different Moore poems for inclusion in his scrapbooks. Although Moore is known for his libertine ways, according to Gross, "his classicism somehow exempted him from the charge of immorality and eroticism in the United States" (356). Moore's "licentious love

12 Despite the fact that these scrapbooks occupy a private genre of writing, Gross argues that they were all actually intended for public use. Jefferson's work on the New Testament was bound in the same manner as these books, held together with dark brown boards in the same manner (Gross 4).

poems refined by sensibility" appear numerous times throughout the scrapbooks (Gross 212). Amongst the Jefferson collection of scrapbooks a consistent theme prevails which is illustrated by the above lines as they appear in the "Poems of Family" book. More than sentiment toward one another as some of the letters to his family suggest, Jefferson is concerned with the appearance of his family's cohesion, which would be determined by their happiness. In this instance he makes fun of the "Fop" or dandy, in order to make light of his occasional characterization as libertine. Also though, by including this tidbit in his granddaughters' scrapbooks it works to warn them of similar men of this type. Such a characterization would be ruinous to the already tentative "foppishness" of Jefferson's perceived identity. Should the characterization of libertine become established in public he would be ruined. He was already the source of much controversy because of his position as Minister to France during which he enjoyed much intemperance, both gastronomic and reportedly sexual (Ellis 97).

Jefferson, somewhat as a testament to his status as a patriarch, kept very detailed garden and farm diaries, which contain everything from his accounting of goods to slave biographies to letters from acquaintances requesting seeds from his farm. Titled simply the *Garden Book* and the *Farm Book,* these catalogs of daily life on the Jefferson estates reveal a unique collection of facts, figures, and descriptions of life at Monticello. The *Garden Book* (1766-1824) and *Farm Book* (1774-1826) are among a number of private texts that allow readers to see how the patriarch Jefferson can be understood, or how he reflected on his personal identity through cataloging his ideas and observations about the garden and farm. The entries in these diary-like texts reveal a Jefferson who "possessed a love of nature so intense that his observant eye caught almost every passing change in it"

to the point that "we know when the first purple hyacinth blooms in the spring" (Betts *Garden Book* v-vi). Jefferson describes in great detail the life-cycle of his favorite vegetable, peas, and he notes the weight of anything from a pint of strawberries to a bushel of lime, and he even notes the differences between his bounteous collection of herbs, flowers, and vegetables and those of his neighbors, especially noting when their selections yield more favorably.

Jefferson's garden and farm diaries have not been given much attention, despite the fact that "in summarizing what he considered his most important services to man, Jefferson mentions the introduction of the olive tree and dry rice into South Carolina. He ranks these along with the writing of the *Declaration of Independence*, his advocating freedom of religion, abolishing the law of entails, and striving to diffuse knowledge more widely" (Betts vii). Of these accomplishments he says, "The greatest service which can be rendered any country is, to add an useful plant to its culture; especially, a bread grain; next in value is oil" (Gross 254). In a letter to a Mr. Giroud, the man responsible for sending many plants and seeds for propagation from France to Virginia, dated May 22, 1797 Jefferson thanks him for his efforts. Jefferson states:

> One service of this kind rendered to a nation, is worth more to them than all the victories of the most splendid pages of their history, and becomes a source of exalted pleasure to those who have been instrumental to it. May the pleasure be yours, and your name be pronounced with gratitude by those who will at some future time be tasting the sweets of the blessings you are now procuring them. (*Garden Book* 256)

This passage, while arguably overstated a bit to show graciousness, demonstrates how important agriculture is to Jefferson. In reality though, Jefferson was distressed at the abundance of tobacco and other damaging crops being grown in the south and attempted to enhance the productivity of the soil by introducing new plants there. The examples of dedication to the important field of agriculture such as that shown by Jefferson's description of new crop propagation is an often understated part of Jefferson's legacy. It is in these careful, detailed descriptions that Jefferson is presented as a knowledgeable, observant man of science and patriarch of a household. These diaries are also useful to Jefferson's economic status, for which these diary-like account books were used most often.

Jefferson's love for food was commonly known, but his private writing on the matter was limited and written in a naturalistic manner with few exceptions. Patrick Henry wrote that Jefferson "has abjured his native victuals in favor of French cuisine" which was "nearly an accusation of treason" (qtd. in Cerami 127). Among the other poems of family in Jefferson's scrapbook, situated between poems called "Home" and "Address to a Husband" is an "Ode on Potatoes":

> Where lies sterling taste in eating?
> In the costly French ragout?
> I say No, but in Potatoes;
> What gentle friend, say you?
>
> Sordid Epicures may glory,
> In the joys their feast afford;

May Contentment and Potatoes,
  Ever spread my humble board.

...

O thou honest Irish sirloin!
  How I chuckle when I see
Social on the table smoking,
  Hot Potatoes stand by thee!

Here, ye nauseous frog destroyers,
  Here the feasts of health behold;
Feed on these, ye wiser Irish,
  If ye covet to be old.

Happiest produce are Potatoes,
  Of Hibernia's happy Isle;
The support of toiling millions,
  And the glory of her sail.

These refin'd to snowy whiteness,
  With Munditia's bosom vie,
Please at once her nicest palate,
  And delight the wand'ring eye.

These, in bread, in pie, or pudding,

Scallop'd, roasted, boil'd excel;
All their uses, all their value,
Not the Muse herself can tell.

Never may those virtuous Irish,
Who their King and Country serve,
Never may they want Potatoes
Who those noble roots deserve.

Although Jefferson's interest in Irish culture could be understood as one of the reasons for a poem such as this one in his possession, the unique position of the poem suggests a deeper meaning. Jefferson strived to place his poems in an order that acquired the meaning he intended, and with topics such as "Home" and "Address to a Husband" flanking it, "Ode on Potatoes" takes on new importance. Rather than an amusingly mundane poem, this passage reflects the sentiment that Jefferson expressed that, "the greatest service which can be rendered any country is to add an useful plant to its culture" (Gross 254). These three passages are, in a very real way, what Jefferson perceived as the ingredients for successful domesticity: home, food, and a husband's duty in the home. Situated thus, "Ode on Potatoes" takes on a powerful meaning for Jefferson as he passes on the message to his granddaughters. Food means not only prosperity for Jefferson, but as in this case, signals a deeper cultural meaning as well as economic prosperity at home. In this poem the Irish are "virtuous," surprisingly sensuous as when "bosom" and "snowy whiteness" are so closely connected, and patriotic in their "honesty" and "reliability."

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Byrd and Jefferson are two examples of eighteenth-century men for whom writing was a way to work out questions of identity. Byrd describes his political desires in a way such as to excuse transgressions which must happen to attain the post he wants. He writes of his sordid sex life with his wife, other women, himself, and he writes about scandalous sexual acts in a Supplement created for his own use. He obsessively catalogues his eating habits in a quasi-religious way, although in contrast to medical advice on proper health. Jefferson's private writing is harder to come by than Byrd's because he has less opportunity for privacy as a prominent member of the public sphere and hesitatingly expresses emotions and desires in writing. Jefferson alters his language in such a way as to divorce himself from the intimate language he uses in his famous "Head & Heart" letter, in his parental advice to his children, and in connection with his wife's personal illness in a letter to congress. Jefferson expresses libertine desires through clippings that appear in his scrapbooks, either inadvertently or as a warning to his granddaughters. And he spends a lot of time describing the inner-workings of his garden and enjoys a treasonous gluttony for fine food. Such deliberate characterizations in the private writings of these two patriarchs allow us to see the way appetite is used to create privately libertine identities.

Public Passions

In the first chapter, I discussed the relationship of private works—commonplace books, scrapbooks, diaries, and letters—to their authors' constructed identities in an effort to distinguish the ways in which appetite operates in the construction of self. Chapter Two argues that the representation of passion (which can be seen as a corollary to appetite) in public texts is performed to show a disciplined persona. This chapter will include a variety of public and coterie texts: autobiography, scrapbooks, a "comedy of manners," travel writing, and Jefferson's Bible.

The respect for archival information established by a growing commitment to private texts in the eighteenth century gave way to a deeper cultural impulse to examine personal matters publically. By the early eighteenth century the world of privacy began to shift into the public realm, which resulted in the refinement and distribution of many personal documents such as the autobiography (Hunter 303). These "public utterances" of private texts recognized that studying the lives of others was a beneficial way to understand an increasingly complex reality of temptation (Hunter 313). Byrd's *Secret History,* as an example of a "comedy of manners," may be seen as a predecessor of this eighteenth-century trend by creating a dialog for private matters made for the public (Adams xiii). Jefferson's carefully crafted texts, such as his *Autobiography,* may also be seen as an example of this new trend.

Historian Joseph Ellis argues that Jefferson worried excessively about the public response to his works. Jefferson loathed the lack of control that accompanied writing for the public, and was extremely uncomfortable with the scrutinizing of his ideas. For this

reason, Jefferson only selectively wrote on controversial political issues for the public. He rather chose to suit his argument to the specific audience, instead of making statements that would be certain to aggravate a portion of the public. Jefferson would compose a document exclusively for a group of like-minded people, thus creating a third category of texts, coterie, and complicating Habermas's theory of the private sphere. Rather than dare to inflame the general public, he would use writing reflectively, selectively, and in a guarded fashion, not unlike the classic rhetoricians he wished to emulate.

Since texts written for a general audience cannot be written with every reader in mind the way that private or coterie texts can, publically written works differ greatly from others written by the same author. Byrd and Jefferson both wrote public survey-like catalogues of Virginia, *The History of the Dividing Line between Virginia and North Carolina* (1728) and *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785) respectively, but Byrd published little else of note publically. Jefferson, on the other hand, wrote extensively for political purposes, but only rarely for public distribution. Byrd's writings for public distribution diverge significantly from his private works. Because many of the texts that Byrd produced were made to be kept absolutely secret, such as the *Sexual Lexicography* or his *Secret Diaries,* they can be used in opposition to his public texts in order to distinguish his construction of the public self in regard to temptation, appetite, or what I call public passion.

Byrd's Public and Coterie Works

Byrd's *Histories,* an official version of the dividing line expedition and a special one written for his group of friends, depict both the publically accepted temptations and those appropriate for a known group. In 1728, at 54 years of age, Byrd wrote *The History of the Dividing Line between Virginia and North Carolina* which described the surveying expedition to determine the boundary between Virginia and North Carolina. Byrd was appointed commissioner of the survey and was therefore responsible for providing a report of the actions which took place during the expedition. The original history was a formal version of the expedition's accounts, including descriptions of the wilderness, difficulties in conducting the survey, and descriptions of the animals and plants which the expedition encountered. The first, more formal version describes the expedition in a professional, emotionless manner, suitable for use as a historical document of the expedition as well as a work of natural history. But there is another version of *The History* written for Byrd's friends alone.

In *The History of the Dividing Line* Byrd describes the colonizing method he feels would have been most beneficial to the early Americans. If only they could have "brought their Stomachs to embrace this prudent Alliance," of intermarriage with the savages, he feels the American Indians would have become complacent, tame, and white. Byrd describes the women the surveying party encountered in varying degrees in the two versions. In one instance in *The History,* Byrd recalls, "we came upon a Family of Mulattoes" (56). The entry for the same day in *The Secret History* describes a slightly different occurrence:

> Shoebrush & I took a walk into the Woods, and call'd at a Cottage where a Dark Angel surpriz'd us with her Charms. Her Complexion was a deep Copper, so that her fine Shape & regular Features made her appear like a Statue en Bronze done by a masterly hand. Shoebrush was smitten at first Glance. (*Secret History* 57)

Even in the midst of land disputes and the slaughter of hundreds to thousands of people, he concentrates on this "Dark Angel's" "Charms" and her fine "Shape," seemingly as a good-will gesture according to the first passage. Yet, Byrd distances himself from the "Charms" which have Shoebrush "smitten" in this instance. Rather than volunteering his virility toward the cause of brotherhood, as would be easy to believe was his inclination, Byrd divorces himself from the act by stating that "Shoebrush was smitten" only. Either this lady is among the family mentioned in *The History,* or the expedition during which Byrd and "Shoebrush" come upon this woman is not even mentioned in the original version. It seems, based on the description of "deep copper" and "Bronze" that this woman could be an American Indian, and was excluded from the original *History* altogether. Byrd's description of her "Charms" and her "fine Shape" depict sexual undertones, rather than the totally non-sexual example given in the original version of the history. This detachment exemplifies the difference between appropriate sexual discourse for public texts and the private work he usually wrote for himself.

The significance of the *Secret History* depends upon its creation as a way to examine private matters publically. The original history details an expedition of exteriors and nature with an eye toward posterity, while the *Secret History* is an expedition of

interiors which records feelings, quarrels, and personal temptation not suitable for public scrutiny. Byrd's second version of the Virginia expedition, *The Secret History of the Line,* which historians suggest he drafted during the expedition, then revised and expanded at a later date, thus illustrates how Byrd portrayed appetite for an intimate audience. This separate version of the account was created, in the style of a "Restoration comedy of manners" which he circulated within his group of friends (Adams xiii). In the *Secret History,* Byrd details the sexual exploits about his fellow explorers, the quarrels of the men on the expedition, and his own personal feelings of the men with whom he traveled. Thus, the "two histories" work to create appropriate discourse for a public group and a growing group of individuals for whom "private passions" were a focus.

The *Secret History* also acts as a way for Byrd to show his regard for his fellow travelers and their passions or appetite by the nicknames he chooses to represent them. According to Percy Adams, "for the seven commissioners, at least, the *Secret History* uses only names invented by the author, each of which, in the tradition of the Restoration comedy of manners known so well by Byrd, revealed something about the man to whom it was given" (xiii). The act of intimately renaming these "characters" is itself intriguing. The names do not seem to have been chosen out of respect for anonymity, but rather as a means by which to re-identify the men in this new context. Adams describes the name of "Firebrand" which stood for Richard Fitz-Williams by declaring that "Firebrand" was "always ready to assert his rights vehemently or to make love to almost any white, black, or red female he saw" (xiii). Quite telling of the image he wished to portray was the name Byrd chose for himself, "Steddy," which characterizes the way Byrd would have wanted to be depicted as, "long suffering in the ordeals the party underwent and patient in

settling differences among the men" (Adams xiii). The *Secret History* also included nicknames like "Meanwell," "Dr. Humdrum," "Plausible," "Jumble," "Shoebrush," and "Puzzlecase."Although this manuscript only circulated around Byrd's circle of friends, this text can help us understand the bridge between private and public documents by Byrd. In a March 20 entry, Byrd writes:

> At Night the Noble Captain retir'd before the rest of the company, & was stepping without Ceremony into our Bed, but I arriv'd just time enough to prevent it. We cou'd not possible be so civil to this free Gentleman, as to make him so great a Compliment: Much less let him take possession according to the Carolina Breeding without Invitation. Had Ruth or Rachel my Landlord's Daughters taken this Liberty; We shou'd perhaps have made no Words: but in truth the Captain had no Charms that merited so particular an Indulgence. (79)

The participation in this style of writing shows Byrd's desire to make fun of fellow aristocrats, which was then supposed to boost his own social status, while also participating in a new discourse community. In this excerpt, Byrd recalls for his readers a difference in the social liberties of the Virginia aristocrat with those of North Carolina origins. Then Byrd's text tells us that these liberties would have been welcomed from some *female* residents, although his companion would not warrant such liberties of their affection. This passage suggests that a gentleman such as Byrd was expected to define himself as separate and of a higher status than other gentlemen or aristocrats, especially those from outside of Virginia. In this passage, gentlemen are portrayed as sexually

promiscuous and willing to exploit their own political position, such as Byrd's appointment as commissioner of the survey. These were all qualities that his cohorts would have expected from him in his quest for political gain. However, Byrd's cohorts did not expect the extreme sexual "acts" which he describes as part of his *Secret Diaries* or in his *Sexual Lexicography.* Thus, the coterie text of the *Secret History* balances the austere naturalist patriarch Byrd with his "privately libertine" image portrayed in private works. The compromise between the two establishes Byrd as a powerful patriarch exerting his masculinity, but the excessive sexual licentiousness evidenced in his private works would have been seen as depleting and emasculating. Therefore, the coterie text reveals temperance between his private and public identities in terms of the new expectations of public passions.

Jefferson's Public and Coterie Works

Jefferson's public and coterie works may be examined not only by the ways in which the division of categories was blurred upon the appropriation of private matters to "public utterances," or what I call public passions, but also in terms of his mistrust of language, an examination of passions in texts, and his own concern with exteriors as a patriarch. Through such divergent topics as historical posterity to American Indian and Slave passions to his granddaughters' public representations, Jefferson's construction of his self may be examined through his public and coterie texts.

In perhaps the ultimate example of suiting his writing to the audience, Jefferson changed some of his personal documents to reflect a forward-looking notion of posterity. Jefferson knew by the end of his life that the work he and the other "founding fathers"

had done was significant enough to secure them a place in history. So, he altered copies of letters he had written to reflect an awareness of the French Revolution's scale and importance that he did not really have at the time of writing. In letters he had drafted to friends at the beginning of the French Revolution, Jefferson had described the conflict as a passing, short-term situation. When it turned out to be anything but what Jefferson had supposed, he went back to his own record of the letter—carefully copied in a commonplace book—and corrected his original optimism to reflect a growing concern: "Should they attempt more than…the established habits of the people are ripe for they may lose all and retard indefinitely the ultimate object of their aim" (Jefferson qtd. in Ellis 108). The original document reveals no premonition that France's revolution will endure very long (108). Rather, it shows confidence that the French leaders will resolve the issues as, by then, America was doing (108).

The language Jefferson uses to support his retroactive analysis qualifies his statement in a way that Ellis suggests the first did not. By inserting the qualifier "should," Jefferson is constructing a possibility for future problems. Also, he qualifies the readiness of the French people with "more than…the people are ripe for," thus suggesting another area which may "retard" the progress of the situation (qtd. in Ellis 108). The original text did not entertain any notion of a negative outcome, but in the second version of the text Jefferson treats defeat as a possibility when he writes one of the hazards may "retard indefinitely the ultimate object of their aim" (qtd. in Ellis 108). Jefferson's alteration of his perspective is one result of the growing historicity of public texts. This private letter is an example of the way in which private texts were repurposed for public use with greater attention to posterity.

The growing concern for preservation of posterity blurs the lines between those texts produced for private, public, or coterie use. Jefferson's *Autobiography* was one such document prepared by his hand for posterity. His understanding of his own place in history is a remarkable and interesting consequence of his tenure in politics, which he had most certainly paid for personally in the form of scandal, bankruptcy, and the heartache of being kept from his family. However, the same historical awareness that makes Jefferson interesting and archival information important also makes it difficult to differentiate those texts which he actually deemed private and those which should be considered private in most instances. Much could be learned by comparing his work, from private to public to coterie in terms of identity, but because Jefferson is so aware of his historicity it makes the process challenging in this regard.

The introduction of autobiography into eighteenth-century popular culture was part of a shift from using texts for "self-scrutiny," such as in the diary, to uses for "edification" and posterity (Hunter 313). Jefferson wrote his *Autobiography* (1781), at age 77, as a public text which told less about the private man of Monticello than it did about the historically significant political ventures at the time. Occupying less than a tenth of the *Autobiography* is personal information about the man Joseph Ellis calls the *American Sphinx.* Half-way through the unfinished memoir, Jefferson admits his reluctance to write about his personal life. He says, "I shall recur again…towards the close of my story, if I should have life and resolution enough to reach that term; for I am already tired of talking about myself" (62). Jefferson's rendering of his life gives no insight into his personal life and pays no attention to those questions which he would not want answered such as those about his adultery, his alleged "negligence of duty" during

the American Revolution, or his somewhat questionable personal decisions leading to bankruptcy or bending the law for his own benefit. Indeed, Jefferson writes of the *Declaration of Independence,* likely because he realizes its importance historically, but neglects to mention a single incident from the American Revolutionary War in which he was immersed. And yet, Jefferson realizes the importance of France modeling their *Declaration* after his work on the original, and subsequently spends roughly a third of his biography describing the process of the French Revolution. Although it remains incomplete, Jefferson's use of this document can however tell us a great deal about him.

Jefferson's *Autobiography* reveals his mistrust of language which, in addition to his awareness of his political figure, explains his reluctance to identify his appetite through his writing. When describing the formation of laws during the time of the separation from Great Britain, Jefferson questions the use of language to be sufficient to govern the people. He says that, "when reduced to a text, every word of that text, from the imperfection of human language, and its incompetence to express distinctly every shade of idea, would become a subject of question & chicanery until settled by repeated adjudications" (32). Jefferson was never eager to speak in public, and he was reluctant to publish on controversial issues because he felt that an author should always know and write to the audience of a work. When writing publically, it is impossible to write for each individual. Therefore, it is beneficial to those not wishing to be misunderstood, especially with the "imperfection of human language" to write simply for a group or coterie. This passage also works to distance the author from the words by placing the blame of interpretation on the language itself, rather than either the coder or decoder. Jefferson, as it seems then, does not remain accountable for his written works. Certainly

then, if some of Jefferson's writing was under scrutiny, say for historical study, his *Autobiography* simply allows the reader to dismiss their own interpretation for lack of language perfection rather than any misuse by the author.

Jefferson's concern with the interpretation and imperfection of language led him to retranslate, edit, and publish his moral beliefs in a new form of the Bible. One of the most audacious works that Jefferson ever produced, his version of the Bible, titled *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth,* is a volume made from different language editions of the New Testament, thus creating an anthology of what he considered the moral teachings of Jesus.[13] The fact that Jefferson felt he was qualified to rewrite the words said to be sacred by so many demonstrates a libertine audacity to alter sacred words. This god-like appropriation of the Bible creates problems for Jefferson's identity as a deist, since the word of god is said to be sacred to those who believe in Christianity. The audience of this text is decidedly coterie since it seems that Jefferson wanted to tell the truth—although his version of the truth— in terms of Christian worship, but simultaneously did not want the text published. So, this was a text made with a specific set of readers in mind who would have already been aware of Jefferson's feelings on the matter.

The *Life and Morals* was intended as "a document in proof that *I am real Christian,* that is to say, a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus" (Ellis 259). This text was rewritten using only those sections of the Bible said to have come from Jesus, as an attempt to clarify Jefferson's religious convictions (259). As a result, all the supernatural, incredible, or spiritual portions of the Bible—most of it as it turns out—has been deleted.

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13 *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth,* or *the Jefferson Bible,* is a part of the public domain and is therefore available online in full.

For example, there are no angels, no resurrection, no miracles, no prophecy, and no divinity in the Jefferson Bible. Also, in typical Jeffersonian style, the text was rewritten to clarify what Jefferson supposed was the main idea behind Christianity—to be a moral person. In about 1820 Jefferson began circulating the text among friends, some of whom he had promised such a document for some time ("Life and Morals"). However, the text remained unpublished until after his death in 1826. The controversial nature of the text could have been the reason for its posthumous publication, but by the time in his life when he wrote The *Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth* Jefferson was already aware of his historical significance and was preparing for immortality by means of his work.

Jefferson's work *Notes on the State of Virginia,* the second best well-known piece and only full-length book, is an example of a coterie text repurposed for public distribution and illustrates Jefferson's mistrust of language. As an amateur naturalist, in response to a letter from Mr. Marbois (1781) of the French legation in Philadelphia, Jefferson set out to compose a survey of life in Virginia. The French government wished for more information about the state of Virginia, and Jefferson's role—at the time he was Governor of Virginia—allowed him a unique opportunity to incorporate the knowledge he had already collected for personal uses about the state. In conversation with some of his contemporaries Jefferson had mentioned Mr. Marbois's letter and his response of which many individuals requested copies. Because *Notes* is rather lengthy, Jefferson decided that it was too difficult and time consuming to hand-write copies of the document and sought out a price to have them printed. Jefferson recalls the next step in the production of *Notes* in his *Autobiography:*

> I was asked such a price however as exceeded the importance of the object. On my arrival at Paris I found it could be done for a fourth of what I had been asked here. I therefore corrected and enlarged them, and had 200 copies printed, under the title of Notes on Virginia. I gave a very few copies to some particular persons in Europe, and sent the rest to my friends in America. (46)

The intimacy of Jefferson's relationship to *Notes* has, at times, been questioned because of his alleged resistance to see the work published. Reportedly, Jefferson hesitated to have the work published because of the section on slavery, but agreed to a limited publication of 200 copies in France after one of the originals had been mistranslated and circulated without his permission. Jefferson was eventually obliged to make minor adjustments to the text and translate it to the French himself before having it republished in 1785, although still without his name attached. It appears, however, that most everyone was aware of Jefferson as the *Notes* author. The American public also demanded the text, for which Jefferson expanded the second printing. He recalls the history of the second printing of *Notes* in his *Autobiography:* [14]

> Inverted, abridged, mutilated, and often reversing the sense of the original, I found it a blotch of errors from beginning to end. I corrected some of the most material, and in that form it was printed in French. A London bookseller, on seeing the translation, requested me to permit him to print the English original. I thought it best to do so to let the world see that it

14 Later, *Notes* would also find its way to Germany for a third translation and increased popularity.

> was not really so bad as the French translation had made it appear. And this is the true history of that publication. (46)

Clearly, Jefferson is very concerned about the interpretation of his text. The distribution of an erroneous text is perhaps one of the reasons that Jefferson was reluctant to write for the public in general, for this was not an uncommon occurrence.

The now famous section on slavery which Jefferson was reluctant to publish displays public passions and demonstrates his effort to present appetite in a controlled manner. While *Notes* displays Jefferson's vast scientific knowledge including descriptions of geographic formation, natural resources, flora, fauna, and the Virginia people as a patriarch should want to do, *Notes* also occasionally displays Jefferson's adherence to social codes by use of his language. When discussing the Indians of North America, Jefferson compares their way of life to "civilization": "That [civilization] first teaches us to subdue the selfish passions and to respect those rights in others which we value in ourselves" (607). Jefferson seems to be saying that the "selfish passions" are to disrespect the rights of others. This passion is then subdued by civilization which gives men a code by which to live and learn to behave. Under the code of civilization then, passions are restrained. So, in Jefferson's civilization men do not act on their passions because of the moral code that governs them. The "passions" which Jefferson describes make an appearance in another section of *Notes*: "The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other…The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances"

(677). Indeed Jefferson here acknowledges the temperance necessary for owning slaves, whose job it is to be submissive to the master. The "boisterous passions" of which he speaks certainly make the educated reader think of his slave and mistress, Sally Hemings. Thus if Jefferson felt his "selfish, boisterous passions" were not in line with those of the patriarch, but rather with a dictator such as King George, he would have stifled them to adhere to a code of normalcy. As Jefferson writes however, it takes a "prodigy" in order to resist this dynamic of passions or else his "manners and morals" may become depraved and libertine. But, by demonstrating his knowledge of these passions, Jefferson also demonstrates his control of appetite and image as patriarch.

Jefferson's language in *Notes* describes the passions of the red and black subjects in ways which distinguish their status from that of his own. On negro love Jefferson speculates that, "They are more ardent after their female; but love seems with them to be more an eager desire, than a tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation…their love is ardent, but it kindles the senses only, not the imagination" (662-3). The "desire" he details works to animalize the slaves he describes. Rather than possessing a "sentiment" of love for one another, the slaves "desire" one another in a base, animalistic way. The description that Jefferson gives of the slaves shows that he finds they lack "imagination" and other elements of a gentleman. By polarizing the characteristics of "passion" which may befall a master who is not careful with "sentiment" and "imagination" Jefferson is showing his own notions of the polemic romantic realm. Patriarchs such as himself must not have passion or desire, but rather love with imagination and sentiment. Through Jefferson's self-conscious authorship it is possible to see his construction of self relative to social norms and expectations of a patriarch.

The previously privately discussed "desires" become publically discussed topics with Jefferson's publication of *Notes* through his discussion of "manners." On the Indians' government, Jefferson declares in *Notes* that, "Their only controls are their manners, and that moral sense of right and wrong, which, like the sense of tasting and feeling in every man, makes a part of his nature" (630). "Tasting and feeling" of appetite is indeed part of every man's nature. Here Jefferson compares the innate feelings of moral right and wrong to the sensual "nature" of "tasting and feeling." Government should then have a natural sense of right and wrong as its governing regulations, not unlike those that govern the Indians' sexuality. This is a rather interesting analogy for Jefferson to make considering his involvement in government, his appreciation for the government of the Indians, and his appreciation for the beauty and passion of the American Indians. Jefferson writes, "Is it not the foundation of a greater or less share of beauty in the two races? Is it not the fine mixtures of red and white, the expressions of every passion…?" (662). Indeed for Jefferson the "expression of every passion" is an important feature of his writing. The "fine mixtures of red and white" that characterize the "expressions of every passion" did not limit the passions of the American Indian in the same way that they did a patriarch like Jefferson. Jefferson's fascination with these "passionate" expressions, the blushing and flushed look of the skin when impassioned, is an example of a private passion becoming public. While patriarchs should be able to display temperance by expressing private passions publically, desire may not always be controlled. The fascination with blushing demonstrates Jefferson's temperance and use of public passions.

One document—drafted for a select audience—which illustrates Jefferson's attention to public passions was his "Hints to Americans Travelling in Europe" (1787-8) in which he describes the sensuous fleshpot that he felt Paris to be. A common problem, according to Jefferson, occurred when travelers "[are] led by the strongest of all the human passions into a spirit for female intrigue destructive of his own and others happiness, or a passion for whores destructive of his health" (qtd. in Ellis 85). Jefferson was critical of tourists who were "overly impressed with the art and monuments of European capitals, concluding that 'they are worth seeing, but not studying'" (Ellis 85). He felt that these attractions distracted the visitors from understanding the complex social corruption that existed in European urban life. Obviously, this type of text could potentially harm Jefferson's relationship with the French. He wrote it during his tenure as minister to France, during a time in which he enjoyed French delicacies so thoroughly that he grew further and further in debt all the time. Jefferson was able to warn of France's hypnotic lure because he had fallen under its spell himself. Debt would be one tribute to posterity. In these "Hints" lines, Jefferson represents women as both "spirit[s] of human intrigue" and "whores" who evoke man's "strongest passions." These characteristics are fitting, according to Kukla and Ellis's description of Jefferson's relationship with women. Here it seems is one of the few places where discussing sex as a public passion is appropriate for Jefferson.

By speaking out against these amoral acts of recreational sex, Jefferson comes across as a moral, chaste advisor to the naïve. In fact, even the European monuments may be too alluring for visitors to France, as Jefferson advises against spending too much time admiring them. These sound words reinforce Jefferson's American patriotism, an element

which was often questioned as a result of his refined taste and life of excess. One of Jefferson's most admired cohorts, Patrick Henry, was critical of his indulgence in all things French. Henry writes, "Jefferson has abjured his native victuals in favor of French cuisine," which is said to have been very nearly an accusation of treason (Cerami 127). Sometimes, as Ellis cites, Jefferson's personal agenda sometimes conflicted with his professional opinions. Jefferson opposed parliamentary taxation but supported non-importation resolutions against British trade regulations. When "in 1771 his political radicalism collided with his domestic agenda when he ordered an expensive piano from London, 'of fine mahogany, solid, not veneered,' in anticipation of his marriage to Martha," Jefferson again ignored non-importation policies to appease his own desire (Ellis 28). Despite the fact that Jefferson supported the non-importation resolution, he ordered the piano, saying that he would store it until the embargo was lifted. Later, when ordering "sashed windows" for Monticello, Jefferson would have to resist his own recommendation again. These imported items were simple luxuries like the wine he had imported from France to break the embargo yet again (Ellis 28).

Jefferson's desire to create a European Monticello could have influenced his decision to write "Hints to Americans Travelling in Europe." While in Europe, Jefferson travelled in a large, hand-carved carriage crafted by his slaves back at Monticello and shipped to Paris for his transportation. The carriage was rather magnificent, complete with glass on all four sides to protect the passengers, one of whom was James Hemings. James, brother to Sally Hemings, had been brought over to Paris to learn the art of French cooking so that he might better serve Jefferson as his personal chef both in Europe and America. A costly education indeed, the techniques of French cooking James learned

later necessitated the use of fresh ingredients grown specifically for Jefferson back in Monticello. But while in Paris, Jefferson needed a place to live. For the first few months he went from hotel to hotel, seemingly looking for the best. Then, he finally decided to rent the entire Hotel de Langeac on the Champs-Elysees near the present-day Arc de Triomphe, then on the outskirts of the city. This building, a fashionable and roomy three-story dwelling, was originally built for the mistress of a French nobleman. The French Monticello secured, Jefferson outfitted the abode with several salons, three separate suites, stables, a garden and a full staff of servants that included maids, cooks—including James, a coachman, and a gardener. The Jeffersonian pleasure palace was so over-the-top expensive that the rent and furniture exceeded his annual salary of nine thousand dollars. Meanwhile, Patsy was placed in a Parisian convent school, and Polly was left in Virginia to be taken care of by some family there. Indeed, the Parisian Monticello was complete with lavish French wine and delicacies, everything Jefferson needed to feel at home (Ellis 70).

In Jefferson's scrapbooks, it is possible to see the ways in which public image was a patriarchal concern. For Jefferson, ensuring his daughters' public image was crucial to his own identity and was therefore compelled to offer advice on subjects such as relationship advice and how to be a lady. These scrapbooks were treasured by the family and mentioned during correspondence between family members. His granddaughter Virginia Trist recalled in a letter:

> And he never saw a little story or piece of poetry in a newspaper, suited to our ages and tastes, that he did not preserve it and send it to us; and from

> him we learnt the habit of making these miscellaneous collections, by pasting in a little paper book made for the purpose any thing of the sort that we received from him or got otherwise. (Trist qtd. in Gross 178)

This characterization of Jefferson is not unusual, nor should we ignore it. While Jefferson's reputation as a family man is well established, most scholars cannot balance his sensuous appetite for having affairs with married women, overspending to the point of bankruptcy, and indulging so completely in gourmet pursuits as to alter his lifestyle with the image of a loving, caring grandfather. These images of Jefferson do seem to conflict, but for Jefferson, the relationships he maintained with his children and grandchildren were as much a part of his public identity as author of the *Declaration* as they were his private identity as grandfather. The discussion of personal themes of "family" and "romantic love" illustrate their coterie function toward a family legacy, but also speak to the public utterances of the private sphere.

In another letter, Jefferson's patriarchal care is illustrated by his concern for his granddaughter's education, which is also connected to her scrapbooking as her grandfather has taught her. This letter to granddaughter Cornelia Randolph on December 26, 1808, enforces the connection of the scrapbooks, which were intended to promote the Jeffersonian ideal throughout generations of Jefferson family members. He writes, "I congratulate you, my dear Cornelia, on having acquired the valuable art of writing. How delightful to be enabled by it to converse with an absent friend as if present!" (Gross 178). Here, Jefferson illustrates the scrapbooks' role in his granddaughters' lives in helping them learn to write and communicate Jeffersonian identity to those future

generations or "absent friends." Jefferson goes on to describe the classical writers to whom all readers are indebted to writing. This great tool of communication, he seems to say, allows "lasting fame" to touch all written communication. Not only does Jefferson validate his granddaughter's achievement through his congratulations, but so too does he validate himself as a writer. The words which are committed to paper are those words which are destined to create lasting fame, although whether it is for their own sake or for that of the author is uncertain. So, despite the fact that the scrapbooks were created for posterity, the intimate nature of the scrapbooks is both private and also coterie. These texts were intended to tell the story of a family, but among those surviving members of the family. Essentially then, the scrapbook is like a long letter to be read by each generation, one after the other.

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Though the two versions of Byrd's *The History* were much admired by Thomas Jefferson, he found them to be too frank in matters of sex (Adams xxi). Jefferson often enjoyed reading the manuscripts of Byrd's "two histories," appreciating their differences as well as the choices Byrd made in composing them. But then, that seems to be the purpose of coterie texts. Texts written for specific groups are tailored to the desires or expectations of that group much in the same way writing is constructed ideally. However, in the case of coterie texts, the group size is controlled so that controversial, private, or confidential information is not leaked to countless unknown others, such as was Jefferson's concern with any publication. Indeed, the appropriation of language for

"chicanery" is also a fear of his during this pivotal time when "public passions" move the private realm into public discourse.

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